1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

grains of rice in the hole and covers them with earth, saying: "There is your food. Go into the tomb." After this he dances at the tomb. 754 777

A charm which protects from the stings of scorpions is made by taking inner leaves from the unopened center of the pandanus, small peppers and the roots of *tsingolovolo*, a sort of grass. These are ground together on a stone and a little of the material rubbed into incisions on the palm of the hand and the tongue. A single inoculation gives immunity for life. The person can even pick up scorpions with impunity if he spits on them first. 751 278

It has already been said that the Tanala *ombiasy* are not averse to experiments, and they will invent new charm compounds to meet new circumstances. They even go a step farther and test the efficacy of their charms before selling them, or at least claim to do so. If the charm is an *ody basy* (charm against gunshot wounds) the *ombiasy* will hang it up in front of a *lamba* ("cloth mantle") and fire at it from a distance of ten or twelve feet. If it has been made properly, the *lamba* will be uninjured and the bullet will be found lying on the ground flattened, as though it had struck a rock. If the charm is an *ody omby* (cattle *ody*, protecting herdsmen and bull baiters) the *ombiasy* puts it on and tries its efficacy by thrusting against his thigh an ox horn which has been made as sharp as possible. If the charm is good, the horn cannot pierce his skin. 777 791

Every charm has its associated *fady*, a taboo or prohibition, which must be learned by the maker as a part of the formula, and which is told to the purchaser. Apparently it is not necessary for the maker to observe this *fady* himself, except while actually engaged in the manufacture of the charm, but the person using the charm must observe it consistently or the charm will immediately lose its virtue. The *fady* for *ody zaza* (charms to obtain children) are most numerous. It is forbidden for a woman wearing one to eat food directly from the pot, to lend her mat or *lamba* to another person, or for anyone to use them. She is forbidden to run races, or to poke her finger into a child's cheek to make it laugh. It is also forbidden for anyone to stop a woman wearing such a charm by standing in front of her with both arms held out sidewise. At the time a woman assumes an *ody zaza* she announces these *fady* to everyone in the village and a person who breaks or causes her to break one of them will be called before the village assembly, reprimanded and, if it was done maliciously, fined. 777 842

The *ody basy* has as a *fady* the pointing of a bamboo water bottle toward the door of the owner's house, unless water is being poured 777 784

777 784 out at the time. The owner of an *ody vary* (charm to promote the growth of rice) has two *fady:* to throw out the burned rice from the bottom of a cooking pot instead of eating it and to arrange the hair while in the rice field. The owner of an *ody tolona* (charm for wrestling) must not eat mashed manioc, which would make the muscles soft. The owner of an *ody omby* (cattle charm) must abstain from boiled taro leaves for the same reason. The charm against scorpions (*ody hala*), the contents of which have already been described, has three *fady* associated with it. The owner must never kill scorpions, pick up live coals or a brand from the fire with his hands, or eat the fruit of the *lofika* vine unless he has peeled it himself with his teeth. *Ody tembote* (for curing illness) have a great variety of *fady* varying with the nature of the complaint.

If the owner of a charm breaks its *fady*, the charm immediately loses all power. He must take white earth and make a spot with it in the middle of his forehead and on either cheek. The power of the charm then returns.

A person usually acquires the benefits of a charm by simply wearing it or keeping it in his house, at the same time observing the *fady*, but there are a few charms which require an inoculation, like that already described for the scorpion charm. When an *ody fôlaka* [755] (a charm for skill in curing fractures) is bought, an incision is made in the heel of the purchaser's right hand and a little of the medicine rubbed in. Part of a charm to make blow-gun arrows deadly also consists in splitting the lip and inserting a little of the medicine. Apparently these were the only charms with inoculation in ancient times, but some forty years ago an Imerina slave who was very expert in bull baiting introduced a charm for that purpose which required it and it is now sometimes used with charms against lightning, *ody tandraka*, in imitation of the Imerina practice.

All charms must be treated with respect and must not be handled more than is necessary. Especial pains are taken to keep them out of the way of children, for if they play with them injuries may result. [154] Charms for working evil, such as killing enemies, etc., are especially dangerous and it is thought unsafe to keep them in the house.

[432] Charms can be sold without ceremony either by their makers or by persons who have themselves bought them. The transfer is complete and there is no danger to the seller. On the other hand, it is dangerous to discard a charm, for this offends it and it may turn its powers against its owner. To prevent this, the owner takes a fungus called *olotafina*, grates it on a stone and puts some of the

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

powder on the middle of his forehead, on either cheek and on his tongue. In general, the only charms which will be discarded are evil ones which have accomplished their object.

Charms for the family or lineage are much less numerous than those for the individual. Nearly all such groups seem to have *ody andro* (charms to bring general good fortune), which are kept in the dwelling of the family head. There are also charms against hail and locusts. Apparently one family or individual in each village will have such a charm which is used for the benefit of the whole group. The locust charm, *ody valala*, consists of a small basket containing scrapings from the roots and shoots of a plant called *ramanjavana*. The name means "to make clouds," because a little vapor flies up when the plant is cut. When a locust swarm is sighted, the charm is brought out and hung on a pole on the side of the *kianza* ("village square") from which the locusts are coming. A fire is made under it with the leaves of the same plant, producing dense clouds of smoke. The charm against hail was not learned. Among the pagan Imerina, every village had its hail and locust charms, each with its guardian, who received a small subsidy from the inhabitants.

Every Tanala village has a charm and many have two. The main charm is called the *tepanony*. Some famous *ombiasy* is called in to make it at the time the village is founded. He determines the proper materials by divination, pounds them together, adds a piece of silver money, and then buries the whole in the center of the *kianza* ("village square"). Over the charm are planted roots of four plants, the *sonjo* ("taro"), *sody fafana*, *ahibita*, and *arivotombelona*. The spot is usually enclosed by a little rectangle of stone slabs set on edge. In some villages the plants are watered and tended, in others they have been allowed to die. If the village moves as a whole, the *tepanony* is usually dug up and reinterred at the new site. The *tepanony* protects the village from pestilence, also from lightning and malevolent ghosts, if the divination has shown that there will be danger from these at the site chosen. It does not protect from enemy attack.

The second village charm is known as the *kovavy* and has the special function of protecting from enemies. Apparently most villages had a *kovavy* in ancient times, but with the establishment of peace they have become unnecessary and have mostly disappeared. The *kovavy* was placed in a small fenced enclosure just outside the principal gate. Apparently the form was rather variable. In a few cases it seems to have been a wooden image, set with its face toward

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

be no idea of spirit possession. The unconscious *mpamosavy* would go to bed like anyone else, then rise and do his evil deeds and night running in a somnambulistic condition. One man did not know that he was an *mpamosavy* until his wife told him that he rose every night after they had gone to bed, went out, and returned some hours later with his body icy cold and his feet covered with dew. A similar case among the Betsileo seemed well authenticated. The child of a wealthy Christian family had died and been buried in the cemetery. It was found that some one came at night and trampled on the grave, tore up flowers that had been placed on it, etc. A watch was set and it was found that the offender was a female servant of the family. She had been the child's nurse and her devotion to it was unquestionable. She was overwhelmed with grief when she found what she had done, and all those who knew her were convinced that her acts had been unconscious. With such instances in mind it is not hard to understand why persons accused of being *mpamosavy* often doubt their own innocence, or why even the victims of trial by ordeal believe in its efficacy.

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FADY

The term *fady* is equivalent to the Polynesian taboo. It means a prohibition of any sort and, by an extension of the idea, the act or thing prohibited. The term is applied equally to acts which are simple breaches of good manners, punished only by popular disapprobation, and to those which are offensive to the ancestors and bring supernatural punishment. There are hundreds of *fady* and no one person is familiar with the entire series. In general, a few of the most important are known and obeyed, while the rest are known only to the *ombiasy* and afford them an unfailing supply of reasons for illness and misfortune.

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Tanala *fady* may be roughly classified as general *fady*, observed by the entire tribe, *fady* of the gens and village, and individual *fady*. The latter are nearly always associated with charms and have been described under that heading. Many of the general fady are associated with ideas of sympathetic magic. Thus it is *fady* to bring a flaming brand into the house, as this will bring in danger. It is also *fady* to carry a burden across the village square if it is slung on a pole between two men. This is because corpses are carried in this way and if one does it there will soon be a death. There are no doubt other *fady* of similar import. There are also a number of general *fady* on foods. Dogs, rats, snakes and crocodiles are never

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

784 eaten. There is no explanation of this, except that the idea is considered disgusting.

618 784 Nearly every gens has its special *fady*, although there are a few which lack them. Those of the Zafiakotry gens are as follows: (1) To kill or eat wild or domestic pigs, to allow them to be cooked in their pots, or even to have pig meat brought into the village. There are two explanations of this *fady:* (a) The pig eats excrement and other filth and is therefore unclean. (b) The village in which the founder of the gens lived was attacked and taken by the enemy. He fled and took refuge in a thicket. The enemy, following to kill him, were charged by a wild boar which was lying asleep in the same thicket. They concluded that he could not be hidden there or the pig would have run away, so passed on. In gratitude, the ancestor enjoined his descendants never to injure pigs. (2) To injure the bird called *railongy*, a dark-colored bird about as large as an American grackle, having a crest of one or two feathers which project forward. The Zafiakotry not only do not trap or kill these birds, but will buy and release any that they see in cages. The *railongy* is considered the king of the birds, for it takes feathers of all the other species to build its nest. This *fady* dates from the time that the Zafiakotry became the royal gens of the Tanala Menabe and it is believed that its infraction will endanger their political power. It was imposed by an *ombiasy* at the time he gave the first Tanala king a charm in which parts of the *railongy* were included.

The Zanakanony, an aboriginal group who now live among the Zafiakotry, have adopted these *fady*. Originally the group had none.

The Zafimaraonaka have the following *fady:* (1) To kill or eat the *tsingetry*, a small black bird with two white feathers in its tail. This is explained by the story that when enemies were searching for the founder of this gens they stopped to watch a *tsingetry*. While they were doing this their friends shouted to them that dinner was ready and, being tired and hungry, they abandoned the chase. In gratitude the fugitive made the bird *fady* to his descendants. (2) To shout to persons to call them to a meal. This is also explained by the foregoing legend. (3) To eat the *sokona*, a small insectivore which rolls itself into a ball when attacked. This is because a pregnant woman of the gens once ate one and her child was born bent like a bow. (4) To eat the *njohi*, a bird with a long curved bill. A pregnant woman ate one and her child had a long hooked nose. The last two *fady* are observed by both men and women, but apply only to eating the flesh. Members

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

of the gens will kill these animals and trade them to other groups to whom they are not *fady*. 784 618

The Marolahy have a *fady* against eating wild pig, but can kill it or keep the meat in their houses. This is because they were once very fond of the meat, and, after a hunt, gorged themselves with it so that many became ill and the chief of their village died.

The Tevato have the following *fady:* (1) To eat wild or domestic pig, because these animals are filth eaters. (2) To eat eels, either the large spotted *tona* or the ordinary eel. (3) To eat meat killed by other gentes. (4) To eat or cook with utensils used by persons of other gentes. They say that all these *fady* are inherited from their ancestors who had them when they came to Madagascar from "Maka," i.e., [167] Arabia. They are known to have entered the Tanala territory from the southeast coast and probably do have some Arab blood. In this gens a man who is accused of any offense will say: "I will eat a *tona* if I did it." This is a binding oath, and, if the accuser still doubts his word, he has the right to attack him seriously, with a knife or axe.

The Zafindranolava do not eat wild or domestic pig, saying they are filth eaters.

The Andriavahoakarivo do not kill or eat parrots, the *fady* being explained by the following story: The founder of the gens was attacked by robbers, beaten unconscious, and buried in a shallow grave. He recovered consciousness, but thought he was dead and made no move to escape until he heard the clamor of parrots in a neighboring tree. Then he concluded he was alive and dug his way out. In gratitude he made the parrot *fady* to his descendants.

The Zafindiamanana do not kill or eat goats, saying that once a goat which had been improperly butchered lived for a long time, disturbing the village with its cries and disgusting the people so that they were unable to digest the meat.

The Zafimaniry have the same *fady* in all their divisions. These are: (1) To kill or eat lemurs. This is because they have hands and finger nails like human beings, and are the descendants of men who long ago became lost in the forest. (2) To eat the *sora*, a small spiny insectivore. This is because in eating one of them a man once got a spine stuck in his throat. It became infected and the man died. A second reason is that the *sora* lives with rats, which are unclean, and sometimes rats turn into *sora*. (3) To kill or eat the *sohi*, a very small bird. This is because when the ancestor of the gens was hiding in a thicket from enemies a flock of *sohi* came and settled on the

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

618 branches. The enemy saw them, thought no man could be there,
784 and went on.

The Zafindrasoavory and the Zafisomotra have no *fady*. The latter are a newly arrived group who have come from the Betsileo country within six generations. They live among the Zafiakotry and imitate their *fady* to some extent.

In marriages between gentes, men always keep the *fady* of their gens and these descend to their children even if the family is matrilocal. At the same time, children of a matrilocal marriage will usually observe the *fady* of both their father's and mother's gentes, as a matter of courtesy. Women retain the *fady* of their own gens until after the birth of the first child, when they adopt those of their husbands. Very often they will practice both. If a woman belongs to a gens which has no *fady*, she will adopt her husband's *fady* at once.

The gens *fady* just described is the only thing in Tanala culture which might suggest totemism and it would require a considerable stretching of even that much abused term to include such phenomena within its scope. There is nowhere any idea of descent from, or even collateral relationship with, the *fady* animal and in many instances the members of the gens are quite willing to kill it. Even those who will not kill it themselves will often encourage Europeans to do so. I was more than once asked to hunt wild pig which were damaging plantations belonging to gentes to which they were *fady*. There are no ceremonies to increase the *fady* animals, no representations of these animals are used in art, and their names are never used to designate gentes.

784 In addition to the *fady* observed by gentes, each village has its
621 own particular *fady*, given by an *ombiasy* at the time the village was founded. I suspect that such *fady* are a part of the *tepanony* or village charm, which was also given to the village at this time, but the natives were not clear on this point. In some villages it was *fady* to allow strangers to enter on certain days of the week. If the visitors were important they would be lodged in a house outside the stockade and their wants attended to there. Pork could not be brought into Ambohimanga or Apasinambato, or castor oil beans or oil into Avohitarivo. In certain villages it was *fady* to bring a rice mortar in unless the mouth was covered with a *lamba*. This was because the mortar had a big opening and to bring it in uncovered would leave a big opening in the magical defenses of the village, through which all sorts of evil could enter.

1; Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8

The breaking of a village *fady* entails injury to the whole village and may be punished by a fine or by rough handling on the part of the villagers. However, there seems to be no attempt at purification. The breaking of a gens *fady* affects only the person who has broken it. If forbidden food has been eaten, the offender puts a silver bracelet in water and then gargles with the water, saying: "I have eaten something forbidden, and for this reason I gargle with silver water. I wash myself now that I may be purified and that the offense may not cause me illness or accident." The purification is performed in private and neither gods nor ancestors are invoked.

Fady are imposed by *ombiasy* or by an ancestor upon his descendants. Apparently there is no method by which they can be revoked. The only thing which corresponds to the temporary and revokable taboos which are such an important feature of Polynesian culture is the prohibition which a person may put upon entering his house. If a man wishes to be undisturbed, he will set up a ring of grass or vine in a cleft stick outside the door. The observance of such a prohibition is simply a matter of good manners and the custom seems to have no religious implications.

OMENS

The Tanala pay relatively little attention to signs or omens. Those which are recognized are known to everyone. A man may sometimes consult an *ombiasy* to learn the meaning of some peculiar and unnatural happening which he feels must be significant, but I could not learn that *ombiasy* themselves ever consult omens before coming to a decision. They believe the *sikidy* to be so effective that all other forms of divination are unnecessary.

The commonest and most generally recognized omens are as follows: If one sees an *antsangoa* (a species of large walking stick insect) it is a sign of approaching death in his family or village. This is because the legs of the animal stretch out in front and behind like the poles of a bier. The size of the animal indicates the importance of the person who will die and its color that of the shroud in which the body will be wrapped.

If a snake called *fandiovarika* (a small species about 2 to 2½ feet long and 1 inch in diameter) crosses one's path or enters the house, a member of the family will die.

If a person going on a journey sees a crocodile lying in the sun, it is a sure sign that he will die on the journey.